

THE CHAPLAIN IN THE AAA (MISSILE) COMMAND
IN THE REGIMENTAL CONCEPT

BY

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I. SCOPE

This Monograph will discuss the role of the AAA (Missile) Command Chaplain in the Regimental concept. The concept of the chaplain's role will be treated in the three major areas of his responsibility: Religious Services, Pastoral Activities and Character Guidance. It is felt that the primary emphasis of the chaplain's program for AAA Command personnel is in the pastoral area. This report will, therefore, go into greater detail in the area of Pastoral Activities. (The major portion of the chaplain's work is the area of pastoral activity).

The chaplain must be certain to include giving to the Commander and Staff information, advice and recommendations relative to factors effecting morale and morals of the Command.

The soldiers in isolated AAA Batteries have an alert mission twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, fifty two weeks a year, summer and winter. On Site facilities are limited, duty is demanding and monotonous. Personal and family problems are numerous. The AAA chaplain is a "circuit riding" pastor, visiting his people at work, home and play.

II. PROBLEMS AND FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEMS:

A. Guided missile Battery Sites are scattered in and around major metropolitan and industrial areas of the contin-

ental U.S. This makes religious coverage a problem for the chaplain partly because of distance and traffic.

B. Because of the emergency characteristics of the mission of Air Defense guided missile units, minimum "manning details" are required one hundred percent of the time in each Unit in the accomplishment of its mission. At least fifty percent of the time the presence of this detail, amounting to approximately thirty three percent of Unit personnel strength, is required on Site or in close proximity to Site depending on the alert status of the Unit. The remaining fifty percent of the time troops must be relatively near to Site, except for those Units on a three hour alert status.

C. Most AAA Units are lacking in classroom, theater and chapel facilities. In the interim these activities are conducted in the day room precluding use for which it was intended. Army regulations authorize construction of certain type facilities, as chapels, theaters, service clubs, gymnasiums, etc., on the basis of an installation's military troop strength. The military troop strength of AAA Units on a Site often fall below that required by existing regulations for such facilities. Consequently AAA Units often lack in facilities of this nature.

D. When the personnel strength drop, as it does period-

ically because of overseas levies, discharge, lack of re-enlistments, etc., the work load of personnel is temporarily increased due to minimum manning requirements, details and training requirements.

E. Family housing though increased considerably by government leasing, "Capehart housing" and MCA housing within alert distance of AAA Sites is usually difficult to obtain. Often the cost is beyond the financial capabilities of many enlisted and company grade Officer personnel in certain areas.

F. Attendance at religious services conducted on Site is usually small because of size of Battery and attendance of personnel at local churches.

G. There is an unusually high rate of personnel turnover and loss, especially in the critical areas of highly trained technical specialists.

H. AAA Batteries in most instances are located in or adjacent to civilian communities. Due to the absence of on Site recreation and housing facilities personnel must frequent the local civilian community for recreation purposes when off duty.

The families of many men live in these communities. An additional problem of segregation in certain civilian areas versus the absence of such in the military has created a problem in some communities in securing adequate family hous-

ing for all personnel.

In view of the above problems confronting a chaplain of an AAA Unit, such as broad area coverage, extensive community relations, inadequate chapel facilities and rapid turnover in personnel, we will consider the first mission of the chaplain as listed in the scope of chaplains activities, that of religious services.

III. RELIGIOUS SERVICES

A. Mission

The mission is to surmount the many obstacles preventing an adequate religious program for all personnel on a widely scattered area basis. As an example, a missile Battalion is divided into four Batteries, usually located at four or five separate areas from twelve to forty miles apart. The chaplain must travel from fifty to one hundred twenty five miles in covering the Battalion. This presents the problem of time and distance that must be reckoned in planning services for more than one Battery on the same day.

In planning a religious program for AAA personnel the following items must be considered:

1. Travel time and distance between sites.
2. AAA Batteries have an alert mission twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, fifty two weeks a year, summer and winter.

3. On Site religious facilities are limited and duty is demanding.

4. Married personnel live in widely scattered areas, usually not near the Site.

5. The urgency of training and inspection with a minimum of personnel has highest priority.

In consideration of the above factors the chaplain places the major religious worship emphasis conducted on Site into that of weekday and Sunday services in the order given.

There is a small attendance at Sunday service conducted in Batteries on Site. This is due in part to the small troop strength of the Battery and attendance of personnel in local community churches.

Centrally located Sunday morning worship services seems to work best. A chaplain who conducts services at locations where it is convenient for families is likely to have a successful religious program. This is being done at a number of installations and is very successful. This arrangement gives the chaplain satisfaction that he is performing one of his primary missions in the service.

Weekday services on Site appears to be the most effective way of reaching the majority of personnel of the Unit. The service is scheduled during duty hours. Where

possible, all who are available are permitted to attend within the minimum requirements concurrent with the mission.

B. CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN CIVILIAN COMMUNITIES

The chaplain relies heavily upon civilian clergy and community churches in providing opportunities of worship for all personnel.

Special attention is given to those of a different faith than the chaplain. (In accordance with AR 165-15, Cl.)

In the implementation of the chaplain's program in the AAA Missile Command it is imperative that the chaplain actively promote and maintain cordial relations with local civilian churches and clergy. These clergymen can with proper motivation be of invaluable assistance to the chaplain and his military parish. Good rapport in this area is absolutely essential if the chaplain is to accomplish his mission to the Command.

The chaplain can energetically maintain a vigorous, progressive religious program for all members of the command by keeping a personal working relationship with leaders of the major denominations. These leaders will, in turn, supply information regarding programs of benefit and interest to members of the military. For example, the chaplain can secure and maintain current schedules of retreats, conferences and special events of the various faiths conducted by

civilian clergy and churches, and made available to military personnel.

Chaplains can help accomplish this by being available as speakers to local churches and church organizations insofar as it does not interfere with their primary mission.

The chaplain should maintain liaison with all major churches in the vicinity of the Batteries. A current listing of these churches should be posted on all bulletin boards. If possible the chaplain should personally introduce each new family and service man to the local minister concerned. If this cannot be done a letter to the clergyman regarding service man and family should be written at an early date. Personnel are encouraged to engage in religious services and activities as a family whenever possible.

Progressive cordial relations with local clergy and leaders of local organizations creates excellent opportunities for religious, social and cultural expression for military personnel in communities adjacent to Battery sites.

The chaplain as pastor, friend and counselor will in many instances be assisted by reserve chaplains and local volunteer clergy at Sites where there is inadequate chaplain coverage. Through this method, all personnel of the Unit are provided the opportunity for religious education and moral training in group and individual instruction. The

chaplain encourages, promotes and sponsors religious group effort. Church affiliated organizations, solidarities, fellowships and endeavors which nourish a religio-social consciousness within the military are earnestly sought.

It is necessary that all AAA chaplains conduct a semi-annual census of all families within their pastoral care. A current list will assist in an effective ministry to families.

The chaplain will find that the organization of a choral or choir group will be of tremendous assistance to his Unit program and will aid community relationships. There are numerous opportunities to sing at churches, community social functions and radio and television stations. The entire military organization will benefit from this type of program.

C. RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIVES

The appointment of volunteer individuals within Batteries to assist the chaplain is an essential element of the pastoral program in the AAA Command.

The presence of a lay religious representative from the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faith at each Battery Site can be an important link between the chaplain and the men. These individuals provide valuable assistance to the religious program of the Battery. They may distribute liter-

ature, posters, and materials advertising services of worship and religious events. They may act as liaison with the chaplain, civilian clergy and personnel. In coordination with Battery Commander they may make religious announcements at troop formations. These men can correlate departure of transportation to off Site worship, disseminate this information to the troops and report changes or failures in schedules. The chaplain will find here a valuable link in his efforts to improve the moral and spiritual welfare of the Unit. Inasmuch as the chaplain must schedule interviews at the Sites, he will find that the religious representative can be of great assistance in making and scheduling appointments within the particular Unit. These religious representatives can supervise the local chapel corner and maintain the Unit chapel facility.

D. RELIGIOUS FACILITY AND CHAPELS

The chaplain must be provided a definite, dedicated place for purpose of worship, instruction and moral training.

Each Battery Site should have a government sponsored chapel or religious facility to seat approximately twenty (20) persons at the very minimum. Each chapel facility should have the following minimum of furniture and equipment: Twenty folding chairs with kneelers, altar and a combined pulpit lectern. A separate room for consulta-

tions is needed.

This is an area of great need with the AAA Command generally. Many of the Sites have been provided a religious facility or chapel, although not all were provided by the military. The second Army has provided for each Site as suggested above.

IV. PASTORAL ACTIVITIES

The combination of facts and circumstances previously stated and their relationship to morale, causes the chaplain to spend a large portion of his time interviewing, counseling and assisting with personal and family problems. It is in this area of pastoral activities that the chaplain can be of great assistance to members of the Command. This involves a heavy schedule of visitation, counseling and interviewing. This type ministry demands from each chaplain a high degree of dedication and a broad understanding of human problems.

The chaplain should interview all newly assigned personnel and those charged with serious offense. He should also be in constant contact with those in military or civilian confinement facilities and hospitals.

It will be of great value for the chaplain to assist and participate in Unit athletics, recreational programs and social activities.

The chaplain can assist in securing books for estab-

lishing Unit libraries. This can be accomplished in cooperation with local civilian agencies, churches, libraries, social and civic clubs and local news papers.

It is important for the chaplain to be acquainted with local welfare agencies and housing authorities to assist military members needing the services of these organizations.

The chaplain should be acquainted with local law enforcement agencies in the towns and cities near Site locations. He can often be of unique assistance in this important area, by helping to retain a friendly relationship with the local law enforcement groups, civilian populace and the military.

All chaplains must be familiar with "programming and budgeting". Due to requirements for "fund citation" on supply requisitions, most items of equipment needed will not be available unless previously included in the approved budget of the installation or post furnishing logistical support. Requirements for equipment, supplies and funds must be anticipated and properly requisitioned at least eighteen months in advance.

V. THE CHARACTER GUIDANCE PROGRAM

The Character Guidance instruction period as defined in AR 15-120-01 is adhered to closely by the AAA Chaplain.

This includes a one hour instruction period per month using lesson plans and training aids prescribed by DA Directives.

The Chaplain has an excellent opportunity with the small group to teach in the Character Guidance instructional periods. Seldom are there more than fifty men present at any one session. The small number is due in part to various military necessities, sick call, TDY, schools, ration runs, guard, shift workers and training missions.

Inasmuch as it is impossible to get the entire Battery out for a single period of instruction, the chaplain must schedule a make up class for each battery. This means that in a Battalion eight to ten Character Guidance instruction periods will be required monthly to reach all personnel. Considering the distance that the chaplain must travel and the problems involved in scheduling the instruction period, it is obvious that this program alone will occupy much of the chaplains time and energy.

The chaplain must apply himself vigorously and enthusiastically to effect the program of character guidance in the Command. This will often require courage and creative imagination in achieving the high standard of moral readiness desired.

The men in AAA live and serve in the front lines of

great metropolitan centers of the Nation. Self discipline and character is a prerequisite of this particular military duty, as indeed it must be of all military service. Here the chaplain can make meaningful and applicable the principles of the Code of Military Conduct. Each soldier must understand that this is a Nation under God and as such he is responsible as an individual, first to God and to the Nation for his conduct in peace and war.

The chaplain must be an active working member of the Character Guidance Council, alert and sensitive to the needs of personnel and the Military mission.

VII. CONCLUSION

A. The chaplain in the AAA Command is a "circuit riding" pastor.

B. It appears in many instances that the problems confronted by AAA chaplains are similar to those of active duty chaplains with the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's, namely:

1. Scattered camps
2. Distances
3. Circuit riding
4. Religious area coverage
5. Community relations
6. Lack of chapel and other facilities
7. Rapid turnover in personnel, and the like

C. Recommend that a special study be made of the AAA situation and its inherent problems by a special committee and/or the Chaplain Board.

VIII

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